2014 marks the 125th anniversary of Western Carolina University. In recognition of this milestone, this walking trail takes you on a tour of the rich history the campus has to offer.

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

1. Highway 106
2. Mount Zion AME Zion Church
3. Moore Building
4. Madison Memorial
5. Memorial Stadium
6. Beebee Gymnasium
7. McKee Building
8. Cherokee Mound
9. Haywood Field
10. A.K. Hinds University Center (UC)
11. Alumni Tower
12. The Catafount
13. Reid Gymnasium
14. E.J. Whitmire Stadium
15. Ramsey Regional Activity Center
16. Children’s Field at Hennon Stadium
17. Catamount Statue
18. Highway 107

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WCU has held numerous titles over the years, but for the purposes of this tour, the institution will be universally referred to by its current name.

**INSTITUTIONAL TITLES**

1888-1881 Cullowhee Academy
1881-1905 Cullowhee High School
1905-1925 Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School
1925-1929 Cullowhee State Normal School
1929-1953 Western Carolina Teachers College
1953-1957 Western Carolina College
1957-PRESENT Western Carolina University

### 1. HIGHWAY 106

In 1889, getting to WCU was challenging. Dirt roads made travel slow and arduous. It was not uncommon to see faculty and students hitch rides on the Blackwood Lumber rail line that transported logs from EastLaPorte to Sylva along the Tuckasegee River. The first paved road, Highway 106, was completed in 1933 along the backside of Cullowhee.

### 2. MOUNT ZION AME ZION CHURCH

In 1892, 11 African Americans established a Methodist church in a log cabin near Cullowhee. Five years later, a growing congregation purchased land from the Thomas Davis family to build a new structure on the hill where Robertson Hall now stands. In 1926, WCU’s Board of Trustees approached the congregation with plans to purchase the land for a new dormitory. By 1929, negotiations settled on a price to purchase the land for a new dormitory.

### 3. MOORE BUILDING

Built in 1925, it was originally used as a dormitory. Over the years, Moore served as a dining hall for students and classes were held there. Beginning in 1977, the building was home to the Health Sciences Department. The memorial honors WCU’s founder, Robert Lee Madison. Madison worked as a teacher in Qualla Township, where he developed “The Cullowhee Idea.” Madison hoped to improve mountain life by training teachers.

### 4. MADISON MEMORIAL

Was erected on June 4th, 1934 on the site of the original Cullowhee Academy. The memorial honors WCU’s founder, Robert Lee Madison. The mound was central to the village as the location of the town house. The university grew up around the mound until it was leveled in 1956 when Killiam was constructed.

### 5. MEMORIAL STADIUM

In 1949, WCU opened Memorial Stadium to honor students, faculty, and staff who served in the United States Military during World War II. Situated where Hunter Library and the Natural Sciences Building now stand, the stadium was WCU’s official football field until 1973 and offered seating for 3,000 fans. The players’ locker rooms and the press box were located in the Stillwell Building.

### 6. BREESE GYMNASIUM

Is one of six buildings funded by New Deal emergency relief projects. Built through the Works Progress Administration, the building’s construction provided jobs to local residents. It stands as a testament to the important relationship between WCU and the community. Dedicated in 1939, Breese was named after William E. Breese, a past chairman of WCU’s Board of Trustees. Upon completion Breese gave students a new basketball arena and an indoor swimming pool. During the 1940s, Breese was designated as a nuclear fallout shelter. Today, it is home to the physical education and dance programs.

### 7. MCKEE BUILDING

Another New Deal project, was funded by the Works Progress Administration and opened in 1941. The building was named for Gertrude Dills McKee, the first woman elected to the North Carolina State Senate and a member of the WCU Board of Trustees. Once a training school for teachers, the building now houses Anthropology and Sociology, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Social Work, Cherokee Studies, and Forensic Anthropology.

### 8. CHEROKEE MOUND

A Cherokee mound at the present-day location of the Killiam Building. The Cherokee inhabited the area that would become WCU until the mid-17th century. The mound was central to the village as the location of the town house. The university grew up around the mound until it was leveled in 1956 when Killiam was constructed.

### 9. HAYWOOD FIELD

In 1932, WCU’s football program experienced significant growth under its first full-time coach, Charles C. Poindexter. With the original diamond, Haywood Field, was named after coach Bill Haywood and was located where the A. K. Hinds University Center and the Coulter Building now stand. In 1948 the field was moved to where the Arts Annex sits. Ten years later the field was moved to the south end of the WCU campus (see #17).

### 10. A.K. HINDS UNIVERSITY CENTER

Was built in 1968 and named in honor of Anthony Keith Hinds, a former dean and mathematics professor. The UC created a new social center for campus and was emblematic of the general shift of student life from upper to lower campus. The UC underwent a series of renovations in 2001. Today, the UC continues to serve as a place for students to congregate and provides a variety of services including student lounges, a multipurpose room for university events, student mailboxes, and a food court.

### 11. ALUMNI TOWER

Was dedicated in 1969 as part of the university’s Centennial celebration. At 66 feet tall, the tower is both a gathering place for students in the Central Plaza and a symbol of the essential role that alumni play in continuing to shape WCU. Legend holds that undergraduate students who walk under the tower will spend an extra year in college.

### 12. THE CATRAFT

Was constructed in 2011 and has become an epicenter for social activities such as the Valley Ballyhoo, Greek life ceremonies, and impromptu gatherings. Funded by alumni contributions, the fountain creates an important public space for students, faculty, and staff.

### 13. REID GYMNASIUM

Opened in 1956 as part of the university’s campaign to improve athletic facilities. Named after Paul Apperson Reid, who served as president of WCU from 1949-1956 and from 1957-1968, this gym witnessed some historic events in basketball. Henry Logan was the first African American to play for a white public college in North Carolina and Ronnie Carr made the first NCAA three point shot against Middle Tennessee State in 1980.

### 14. E.J. WHITMIRE STADIUM

In 1973, E. J. Whitmire Stadium opened and Catamount football found a new home. Whitmire served on the Board of Trustees from 1949 to 1972 and is credited with the university’s enormous growth during that period.

### 15. RAMSEY REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER

In 1986, the 8,000-seat Ramsey Regional Activity Center opened and replaced Reid as the primary venue for WCU basketball games. The center hosts listson R. Ramsey who represented Haywood, Jackson, Madison, and Swain Counties in the North Carolina House of Representatives for almost four decades.

### 16. CHILDRESS FIELD AT HENNON STADIUM

In 1978, Catamount baseball moved to the south end of campus. In 1994, it was officially renamed the Childress Field at Hennon Stadium in honor of Ronnie G. Childress, an avid supporter of Catamount baseball. The baseball team has accrued 11 SoCon Championships since 1985.

### 17. CATAMOUNT STATUE

What is a catamount? In 1952, coach Charles C. Poindexter decided that the school’s nickname, the “Yodelers,” did not match the aggressive attitude he envisioned for the athletic programs. After a campus-wide contest, students selected the catamount (a mountain cat) as the school’s new mascot. In 2000, a gift from benefactors Irwin and Carol Belk allowed for the commission of sculptor Richard Haillier to create a bronze statue of the mascot. The statue was moved to its current location on the roundabout in 2006.

### 18. HIGHWAY 107

Today, getting to campus is much easier than it was in 1889. Between 1980 and 1982, the four-lane Highway 107 was built. The new road and entrance represent WCU’s continually expanding student and faculty population.